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REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, and 5-37 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 5, 7, 16, 19, 21, 22, 25, 26, 28, 34, 36, and 37 have been amended by the present amendment. The amendments are fully supported by the application as originally filed (see, e.g., page 6, line 30 to page 7, line 14).

Claims 21, 28, and 37 were objected to because of certain informalities. As recommended by the Examiner, claim 21 has been amended to depend from claim 20. Claim 28 now depends from claim 27. In claim 37, the word "configures" has been replaced by "configured". It is believed that the above amendments overcome the claim objections.

Claims 25, 26, and 36 were rejected under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. In claim 25, the term "shielding member" has been replaced by "shielding device" in each occurrence, thereby providing proper antecedent basis. In claim 26, the word "the" has been inserted before "shielding device" and the word "of" has been inserted after "devoid", thereby overcoming the rejections. In claim 36, the phrase "the body portion" has been replaced by "a body portion", thereby obviating the rejection. It is believed that the rejections under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, have been overcome.

As amended, independent claims 1, 16, 19, 25, 26, 34, 36, and 37 require the shield member/cradle member to include a planar bottom portion without any downwardly extending portions at ends thereof. As shown in FIG. 1A, e.g., blood collection shield 100 includes a planar bottom portion 104, which is received in the palm of a user's hand 2a (see FIGS. 2A-2C). It is evident from these figures that the shield member/cradle member does not include any downwardly extending portions at ends thereof. Instead, umbilical cord 6 is received in a trough portion 102 of the shield 100 and can be held by a digit (i.e., the user's finger) - without any downwardly extending portions of the shield for connecting to a fastening or clamping device.

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Claims 1, 2, and 5-37 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,372,581 to Anderson. Claims 19-24, 26, and 36 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,351,866 to Foss. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Anderson does not teach or suggest a shielding device or method for collecting blood in which a shield member/cradle member includes a planar bottom portion without any downwardly extending portions at ends thereof.

With reference to FIG. 6 of Anderson, the umbilical cord holder 20 has a curved trough (bottom portion) 21, including flanges 23 and 29 extending downwardly from ends of the trough. For example, the flange 23 is designed to receive a shaft (not shown) and a cap 25, thereby securing an umbilical cord clamp 26. See, e.g., column 5, lines 11-39 of Anderson.

In Anderson, the umbilical cord holder 20 is formed with downwardly extending flanges 23 and 29 to which clamps 26 and 32 are attached. In contrast, the Applicant's claimed invention requires a shield member to be formed **without** any downwardly extending portions – it is not necessary or desirable to include these downwardly extending flanges in the Applicant's invention because there is no clamping of the umbilical cord.

For at least the reasons described above, Anderson does not anticipate or otherwise render obvious the Applicant's claimed invention.

Similarly, the Foss reference does not teach or suggest a shielding device in which a shield member/cradle member includes a planar bottom portion without any downwardly extending portions at ends therof.

In Foss, vial holder 10 includes first and second ends 30 and 32, respectively, that extend downwardly from a middle section 28 (i.e., "curve away from the middle section 28" – see column 3, lines 1-2). These downwardly extending end portions 30 and 32 are undesirable in the

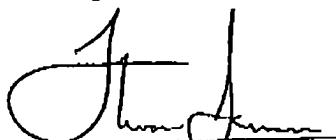
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Applicant's invention, e.g., because they would interfere with the function of securing and stabilizing an umbilical cord.

For at least the reasons described above, Foss does not anticipate or otherwise render obvious the Applicant's claimed invention.

It is believed the application is in condition for immediate allowance, which action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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